

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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R 151905Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7449  
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA  
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

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E.O. 11652:N/A  
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, NU  
SUBJECT:PLI RESPONSE TO SACERDOTAL COUNCIL

REF: A) MANAGUA 3644, B) MANAGUA 3599

SUMMARY: SINCE THE APPEARANCE OF THE SACERDOTAL COUNCIL MESSAGE (REFTEL A), THE GON RESPONSE HAS BEEN GRADUALLY HARDENING IN OPPOSITION TO THE CHURCH MESSAGE. TWO EVENTS ON 13 AUGUST, CRYSTALIZED THIS OPPOSITION. ON THAT DAY, THE LIBERAL PARTY (PLN) ISSUED A STATEMENT STRONGLY OPPOSING THE CHURCH MESSAGE. THE SAME DAY, SOMOZA MADE A SPEECH REAFFIRMING HIS INTENTION TO REMAIN IN OFFICE UNTIL 1981. END SUMMARY.

1. ON 13 AUGUST, THE MANAGUA BRANCH OF THE PLN, ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE OPPOSING THE MESSAGE OF THE SACERDOTAL COUNCIL (REFTEL A), CHARACTERIZING IT AS ANTI-CONSTITUTION AND AGAINST THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE. ACCEPTING "THE CALL OF THE EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE OF NICARAGUA, WHICH  
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ESTABLISHES THE POLITICAL BASIS FOR A DIALOG" (REFTEL B), THE COMMUNIQUE REJECTS "THE MESSAGE OF THE SACERDOTAL COUNCIL WHICH, IN IMPRUDENT AND PARTIAL FORM, BECAME THE SPOKESMAN, IN AN ACCUSATORY FORM, OF ONE OF THE PARTIES IN COMBAT."

2. THE COMMUNIQUE CONTINUES THAT THE ARCHBISHOP OF

MANAGUA HAS FORGOTTEN THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE. THE MESSAGE, IT SAYS, "IN CERTAIN ASPECTS, IN ADDITION TO VIOLATING THE CONSTITUTION...IS CONTRARY TO THE MODERN TENDENCY WHICH PUTS THE CHURCH AND STATE ON A PLANE OF COORDINATION AND SPECIAL UNDERSTANDING." THE CHURCH'S SUGGESTION THAT THE GON RESIGN IN FAVOR OF A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IS OPPOSED TO THE CONSTITUTION AND CONTRARY TO THE PEOPLE'S WILL.

3. THE COMMUNIQUE CLOSES BY CALLING THE CHURCH MESSAGE "IMPRUDENT". THE CHURCH SHOULD MAINTAIN HARMONY AND EQUILIBRIUM OF THE SOCIAL ORDER AND "AN IMPARTIAL POSITION WITH RESPECT TO POLITICAL TENDENCIES WITHIN THE CHURCH CONGREGATION." ANY INTERVENTION IN POLITICAL LIFE SHOULD BE "WITHIN ITS CONCILIATORY MISSION... INVITING (MEN), WITHOUT DISTINGUISHING POLITICAL COLORS, TO RESOLVE OUR PROBLEMS...WITHIN A CLIMATE OF PEACE AND REMOVED FROM VIOLENCE, BUT WITHOUT CONTRAVENING THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER OF THE REPUBLIC."

4. LATER THAT DAY, SOMOZA ADDRESSED A PLN RALLY. IN A STRONGLY-WORDED ADDRESS, SOMOZA SAID, "I AM HERE THIS MORNING TO ASSURE YOU THAT NOTHING AND NO ONE IS GOING TO VIOLATE THE POLITICAL CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC, BECAUSE IT IS THE RESULT OF THE MAJORITY WILL OF THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE." SOMOZA THEN EXPOUNDED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AT SOME LENGTH ON THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPECTING THE VOTE OF THE PEOPLE. "WE ARE GOING TO MAINTAIN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC AND, AT THE PROPER TIME, WE WILL MEASURE OURSELVES AT THE ELECTORAL BALLOT BOXES, TO SEE WHO HAS THE MAJORITY, THE LIBERALS OR THEIR ADVERSARIES."

5. SOMOZA WENT ON TO EMPHASIZE THE PLN'S COMMITMENT TOWARD BETTERING THE LIVES OF ALL NICARAGUANS. THE PLN IS THE MAJORITY, HE SAID. TODAY, HE CONTINUED, "THE STRUGGLE BEGINS FOR THE ELECTIONS OF 1981." SOMOZA PLEDGED NOT TO PERMIT GROUPS DEDICATED TO DESTROYING CIVIL LIBERTIES TO BENEFIT FROM THOSE LIBERTIES TO GAIN POWER. THE PLN WILL WORK TO RETAIN POWER IN THE COMING ELECTIONS--DOING WHAT IT THINKS BEST FOR ALL NICARAGUANS.

6. CITING THE OPPOSITION'S POOR SHOWING IN THIS YEAR'S MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, SOMOZA SAID, "NOW IS THE TIME TO SPEAK, AS IS COMMONLY SAID IN NICARAGUA, 'WITH GLOVES OFF,' WE LIBERALS HAVE THE HISTORICAL RECORD, IT IS DEPOSITED IN THE DEMOCRATIC VOTES AT THE BALLOT

BOX, THE ONLY ONES QUALIFIED ARE THE CONSERVATIVES,  
THE REST MUST QUALIFY. EVERYTHING IS DONE TO WORK  
FOR THE WELFARE OF NICARAGUA AND I CANNOT SEE HOW  
WE CAN GIVE A PLACE IN THE GOVERNMENT TO SOMEONE WHOSE  
ONLY DEDICATION IS TO SUBVERSION, WHEN HE DOESN'T EVEN  
COUNT DEMOCRATICALLY. THEY WISH TO DOFF THEIR HATS  
TO US, BUT I SAY TO THE LIBERALS, WE HAVE THE MAJORITY  
IN THE COUNTRY, WE HAVE A POWERFUL PARTY, WE HAVE A  
PEACE-LOVING PEOPLE, WE HAVE AN ARMY THAT IS THE  
CRUCIBLE OF LOYALTY AND EVERYONE IN NICARAGUA HAS THE  
WILL TO EVOLVE IN PEACE. TO EVOLVE IN PEACE IS TO  
MAINTAIN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC AND TO PURSUE  
EVENTS ACCORDING TO THE SCHEDULE ESTABLISHED WHEN  
THE CONSTITUTION WAS MADE..NEITHER SOMOZA NOR THE  
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PARTY WILL LEAVE POWER."

7 COMMENT: IT APPEARS CLEAR THAT SOMOZA HAS COMPLETELY  
RULED OUT ANY POSSIBLITY OF HIS RESIGNATION AND IMMEDIATE  
FORMATION OF A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT. SOMOZA HAS CLEARLY REITERATED  
HIS INTENTION TO REMAIN IN POWER UNTIL 1981 AND TO DO WHAT HE  
CAN TO SEE THAT THE PLN WINS THE COMING ELECTIONS. THIS SPEECH  
CLEARLY POINTS UP THE DILEMMA IN NICARAGUA; SOMOZA SAYS HE IS  
WILLING TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE OPPOSITION, BASED UPON  
HIS FINISHING HIS TERM OF OFFICE; THE OPPOSITION WILL  
ONLY TALK IF SOMOZA RESIGNS.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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